

And This Will We Do, If God Permits
An Expository Journey through the **Epistle to the Hebrews**
Chapter 3: The Preeminence of Jesus Christ
Hebrews 1:1-4
34: The Preeminence of Jesus Christ: Part 19

WAOY Monday 02/16/09

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our verse-by-verse journey through the **Epistle of Hebrews**, and today I want to continue to look at what the writer of **Hebrews** taught about the Preeminence of Jesus Christ. So let's open our Bibles and read **Hebrews 1:1-4** again together:

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,
2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.
3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

Now on the last broadcast, we were looking at the seven *excellencies* that the writer of **Hebrews** shows us in the second half of verse two and all of verse three. So let's read those verses again together:

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Now in these two verses, we can see that the writer of **Hebrews** is going to great lengths to describe just who Jesus is to his first-century Jewish audience. And by teaching what he teaches here, the writer is showing these Jews and us that Jesus is far superior to any heavenly angel or any Old Covenant prophet.

And by looking closely at verses two and three of **Hebrews 1**, we saw that Jesus is both the instrument by which God made all things, and He is also the heir of all things that are made. We saw that all that God has done in the earth, and all that God ever will do in the earth, He has done and will do for His own Glory. And we saw that Jesus Christ is the radiance, or the brightness, of that Glory. We saw that Jesus Christ is the exact representation of the Father; that He acts and moves and operates in perfect accordance with the Father, for Jesus only does what He sees His Father do. And we also saw that it is Jesus that upholds all things by the Word of His own Power, and that by Him all things consist and have their being.

And on the last broadcast we began to look at the next “excellency” that Jesus Christ possesses, the fact that Jesus Christ - all by Himself - purged our sins. And we read what this writer wrote about this in great detail later on in this same Epistle by reading **Hebrews 9**.

And we saw in **Hebrews 9** that the writer makes several points that we need to understand:

1. Our sins were awful in God’s sight, and needed to be purged.
2. Sins must be purged only with blood.
3. The Blood of Jesus Christ is superior to that of animals.

I told you last time how that being in the world, being out in sin... following the crowd, going and doing sinful things with your friends, will destroy your walk with God. It will harden your heart; it will cause the Voice of God to grow more and more faint; it will rob you of your joy; it will rob you of your will to fight for what is right; it will sap your spiritual strength.

The noise of the parties and the music and the laughter of the sinful world will take out of you the desire to serve God; it will steal from you the best and most valuable thing in all the world: your love for God.

You see, dear friends, the world doesn't have the power or the ability to lessen God's Love for you, but it *can* and it *does* lessen and reduce and minimize and overpower your love for God.

I have watched this over and over and over again in almost forty years of being a Christian. The first two casualties of a worldly life are prayer meetings and Bible Studies. People who are in love with sin and the pleasures of this life care nothing about the serious studies of God's Word, or times of fervent and earnest prayer. So these people begin to "hang out" of prayer meetings and Bible Studies. Something always comes up that keeps them away. They are always too busy, too tired, too sick, or too involved to break away to seek God's Face and study God's Word. After a time, even the Sunday Services become too much, and these worldly, backslidden, and lukewarm people begin to murmur and complain. The Word is too hard; the sermons become too long; the celebration of eternal life becomes boring; those things that have thrilled the redeemed for thousands of years no longer even cause these people's hearts to flutter. This is the very definition of backsliding; and it is prevalent in our day.

People think nothing today of staying out of Church and going fishing on Sunday, or going to a ball game on the Lord's Day, or going shopping or planting a garden, or going camping or boating. One pastor told me years ago that he couldn't even schedule special meetings on Monday nights during football season because the men wouldn't come; they wanted to stay home and watch the game. Before long, these people are gone and it takes a miracle to get them back.

And you can argue with me about it until you are blue in the face, but I will still tell you the same thing. The Bible is clear, and the Bible says that serving God is all or nothing. Hear me clearly on this matter and make no mistake about it: serving Jesus Christ and walking with God will cost you everything. This is not about looking at the cute little baby Jesus in the manger every Christmas, or the wonderful risen Lord every Easter. No, this is a way of life. It is a walk; it is a day-by-day grind that will cost you everything you own, including your heart and dreams. This way is very straight and it is very narrow. If you plan on going this way, you're going to have to strive to enter at the straight gate. You're going to have to push hard and really want to go in, because there are times when it will be very hard.

On this path, God will give you a cross to bear. And that cross will be rugged; it will be heavy, and every morning when you awake you will have to pick up that cross and walk all day long with it. And the people who have been redeemed will not murmur about how heavy the cross is; they will not complain that Jesus demands that they carry it; and they will not bellyache about how much their shoulders ache... not after all that Jesus has done for them in forgiving and washing their sins away.

In this straight and narrow path you can look forward to going through ridicule, persecution, and some of your family and friends turning against you. And if you plan on being a Christian, rest assured that some men will hate you and you will be rejected and thrown out, disowned and laughed at. But Jesus will stand by your side and your sins will be forgiven.

And we have to understand that the Bible doesn't teach that Jesus wants to be first in your life, dear friends. No! The Bible teaches that Jesus wants to *own* your life. He wants it all... lock, stock, and barrel. And He wants it twenty-four hours every day and He wants it seven days every week. If you *don't* want to give Him everything and if you don't desire to give Him everything all the time, then you can keep it all for yourself. Jesus doesn't have any desire at all for you to visit with Him periodically. He gets no glory from an occasional visit from you. For you to periodically tip the Son of God a little token from your wallet is an insult to His Majesty. Jesus Christ will not be put on the back burner for anyone, and you will not "date" Him. You come to Jesus in humble submission, or you don't come at all. You come to Him confessing your sins, or you don't come at all. You come to Jesus with a broken and contrite spirit, or you don't come at all. You come to Jesus with a grateful and a thankful heart that He would even look your way, or you don't come at all. Yes, you come to Jesus in the prescribed manner of a bought and paid for bond slave, or you don't get off home plate.

Beloved, those who truly understand how evil sin is... those who clearly see how wicked human hearts are... those who are not deceived about how wrong they have been... those who have had their eyes opened as to how much they *deserve* to spend all eternity in the lake of fire... those who have had a revelation of how deserving they are of God's wrath... those who have stood and beheld the magnificence and the majesty and the glory and of just how holy and how righteous and

just how pure God is: these know that it is nothing short of marvelous Grace that allows them to enter into God's Presence. These are "the called" who value the fact that it was mercy that rewrote their lives; they are those who comprehend that when they deserved it the least, God gave them Love, and God gave them forgiveness, and God gave them beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for their mourning, and God gave them the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness, and God gave back what the canker worm had eaten; God gave them back what the locust had destroyed and God gave them back what the palmer worm had taken from them; God gave them back what the devil took away, walking with God in the Garden in the cool of the day; and God gave them back what the enemy robbed them of: a real and true and right relationship with the Creator of the universe. And God gave them a new heart. God took out of them the heart of stone and gave them a heart of flesh.

These people, these strange and peculiar people...these odd people, this royal priesthood, this holy nation, this chosen generation, this despised remnant... this group who is willing to lap the water like a dog, who have been called out of darkness, and who have been called to come and dwell and remain forever in God's marvelous light... these saints of the Most High God; they know that it was undeserved favor that caused God set His Love upon them. They know that before the foundations of the world, God chose to place His love on them. They know that it was not anything that they have done that caused God to desire them, and they know that they have no righteousness of their own; their righteousness is of the Lord. These people appreciate what Christ has done for them and they refuse to squander what Christ has done for them. They refuse to let the world drag them back down; they refuse to allow wickedness to rule their lives anymore because they have seen the Lord; they have beheld the Christ of God; they have been washed and adopted and sealed and empowered and infused and inspired by God, and they are no longer the same, and they don't act the same, and they don't talk the same, and they don't walk the same, and they don't desire the same things, because now Jesus lives in them. He walks up and down inside them. Now they are free, and they are empowered, and they are transformed, and their feet are on the straight and narrow path, and their hands are lifted up, and their eyes look to the hills, and their feet run to the altar, and their mouth speaks the

oracles of God, and their eyes read God's precious Word. Their ears hear the sound of Amazing Grace, and these sought out, adopted, born-again sons are now invited to the most prestigious event in all of human history; for they are now invited to come and stand in the very Presence of Almighty God to sing the song of the redeemed throughout all eternity, because all by Himself, Jesus Christ has purged their sins.

The writer of **Hebrews** is telling us here under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost that Christ purged our sins all by Himself. That is, He was both the Priest who administered the purging, and He was also the Sacrifice that was slain so our sins could be purged. And even though Christ was the great High Priest, and even though Christ was the Lamb that was slain, this Sacrifice and this purging was different than anything that had occurred under the first Covenant. Because under the Law, that purging had to be done over and over again every year. But under Jesus, all of our sins are forever forgiven by this one act that Jesus did, one time, once and for all.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **Hebrews**. May God help us all.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. *Soli Deo Gloria*. For the Glory of God alone.